

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in this application.

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (Four Times Amended) An apparatus for cutting and stirring curd, comprising a curd vat with a shaft drivable for rotation, which shaft carries a number of cutting frames extending radially from the shaft and arranged on the shaft in staggered relation, each cutting frame having two frame girders, which extend radially from the drivable shaft and between which a lattice work is situated formed from longitudinal knives and transverse knives, the transverse knives being mounted on the frame girders by welding wherein the transverse knives have openings which are in line, in which the longitudinal knives are received, while means are provided for substantially preventing displacement of the longitudinal knives in the longitudinal direction and wherein each longitudinal knife has a size relative to the size of the openings such that the longitudinal knives are loosely disposed in the openings with a relatively large play ~~at least a number of said opening are of essentially circular or oval shape.~~

2. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least a number of said openings are of diamond shape.

3. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein at least a number of transverse knives, viewed in cross-section have a bent shape.

4. (Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the means for preventing displacement of the longitudinal knives comprise a transverse knife which is secured to both frame girders and which is connected to the longitudinal knives [through welding].

5. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 4, wherein said transverse knife has a bent shape in cross-section.

6. (Original) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the longitudinal knives include a number of U-shapes bent strip like knives, the legs of said U-shaped knives being inserted in adjacent openings of the transverse knives.

7. (Four Times Amended) A cutting frame comprising: a pair of parallel girders, the girders being spaced apart and having a plurality of transverse knives extending transversely between the girders and secured to the girders by welding, the transverse knives having a cutting edge extending transversely of the girders and the transverse knives having a plurality of openings, the openings in one of the transverse knives being aligned with openings in adjacent transverse knives, longitudinal knives each having a longitudinal cutting edge, the longitudinal knives extending through the openings in the transverse knives, the openings being larger in size than the longitudinal knives, the longitudinal knives having means for preventing the longitudinal knives from longitudinal movement.

8. (Amended) The cutting frame according to claim 7, wherein the longitudinal knives have openings, and wherein the girders have openings aligned with the openings in the longitudinal knives, and wherein the means for preventing the longitudinal knives from longitudinal movement relative to the transverse knives comprises a pin extending through the longitudinal knives openings and through the girder openings that are aligned with the longitudinal knives openings.

9. (Four Times Amended) The cutting frame according to claim 8, wherein each opening in the longitudinal knives is of a size relative to the cross-section of the pin to provide space in the openings around the pin.

10. (Thrice Amended) A cutting frame comprising: a pair of parallel girders, the girders being spaced apart and having a plurality of transverse knives extending transversely between the girders and secured to the girders by welding, the transverse knives having a cutting edge extending transversely of the girders and the transverse knives having a plurality of openings, the openings in one of the transverse knives being aligned with openings in adjacent transverse knives, longitudinal knives extending through the openings in the transverse knives, the longitudinal knives being loosely disposed in the openings with a relatively large play, and means for substantially preventing displacement of the longitudinal knives in the longitudinal direction.

11. (Twice Amended) The cutting frame according to claim 10, wherein the longitudinal knives have a leading side having a longitudinal cutting edge and a trailing edge, and each opening has a size greater than the size of each longitudinal knife, the openings comprising recesses aligned with the longitudinal knives and having the leading and trailing edges received in the recesses.

12. (Thrice Amended) A cutting frame comprising:
a pair of girders, said girders being spaced apart from each other and having a plurality of transverse knives extending between the girders, the transverse knives being connected to the girders by welding,

a plurality of longitudinal knives arranged in substantially parallel relation to the girders and being spaced apart from each other, the longitudinal knives being secured against longitudinal displacement relative to the girders,

the transverse knives having a plurality of openings, the openings in each transverse knife being in register with corresponding openings of others of the transverse knives and through which the longitudinal knives pass, each longitudinal knife comprising two legs connected by a part.

13. (Amended) The cutting frame according to claim 12, wherein the part has a "U" shape.

14. (Amended) The cutting frame according to claim 13, wherein the part is a bent part joining an adjacent pair of the longitudinal knives of unequal length.

15. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least a number of the openings are essentially circular.

16. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1 wherein at least a number of the openings are oval shape.

17. (New) An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein the means for substantially preventing displacement of the longitudinal knives in the longitudinal direction comprises one end of the longitudinal knives being welded to one of the transverse knives.

18. (Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 7, wherein the means for preventing the longitudinal knives from longitudinal movement comprises one end of the longitudinal knives being welded to one of the transverse knives.

19. (Amended) An apparatus as claimed in claim 10, wherein the means for substantially preventing displacement of the longitudinal knives in the longitudinal direction comprises one end of the longitudinal knives being welded to one of the transverse knives.